



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

White Sands  
National Monument

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## White Sands News Release

For Immediate Release

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### **White Sands National Monument Proposes to Construct a New Comfort Station**

The National Park Service proposes to construct new restrooms at White Sands National Monument. The purpose of this project is to provide safe, healthy, and accessible restroom facilities for monument visitors. A new comfort station is needed to provide an improved visitor experience for White Sands' nearly 475,000 annual visitors. It is also needed to accommodate large numbers of visitors that visit the monument during special events or missile launch related road and monument closers. Often a line forms outside of the restrooms during these frequent events, which can be a major inconvenience to the visitors. It is also needed to address handicap accessibility; the current restroom facilities do not meet American Disabilities Act guidelines and are not handicap accessible. Additionally, a new comfort station is needed in order to minimize the impacts to the historic building, which currently houses the existing restroom facilities, and to reduce the maintenance needs required by the current restrooms.

White Sands National Monument is considering at least two preliminary project options, or ideas, regarding the construction of the proposed restrooms:

- Option 1 proposes to construct handicap accessible public restrooms north of the current restrooms. This option also proposes to remodel the current restrooms into office space. There will be no change to the historic visitor center building, concession warehouse, or parking lot.
- Option 2 proposes to construct handicap accessible public restrooms inside the current concessions warehouse. This alternative also proposes to remodel the current restrooms so they can continue to be used as restrooms. There will be no change to the historic visitor center building.
- Option 3 proposes to renovate the current restrooms so they are handicap accessible.

An Environmental Assessment will be prepared in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) to provide the decision-making framework that analyzes a reasonable range of options to meet project objectives; evaluates potential issues and impacts to White Sands National Monument's resources and values; and identifies mitigation measures to lessen the degree or extent of these impacts.

We are currently in the scoping phase of this project, and encourage you to send us your thoughts and ideas for additional construction options by April 15, 2011. You may submit comments online at the National Park Service website *Planning, Environment, and Public Comment* (<http://parkplanning.nps.gov/WhsaNewRestrooms>) or you may mail or hand-deliver comments to the address above. Your comments will be considered as we develop the Environmental Assessment. Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment – including your personal identifying information – may be made publicly available at any time. Although you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

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